STARKEY STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE: FORESTVILLE
Consultation Report
June 2015
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1.0 Introduction

Roads and Maritime Services is proposing to remove the pedestrian crossing at the traffic lights across Warringah Road at Starkey Street and install a new pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road east of Starkey Street.

The proposed Starkey Street Pedestrian Bridge would increase transport efficiency on Warringah Road through Forestville, minimise delays, allow for more effective road-based public transport and improve road safety.

1.1 Background

There is currently a very high demand for the pedestrian crossing across Warringah Road at Starkey Street due to the local buses, shops, community facilities and schools. More than 100 pedestrians per hour use the crossing in the morning peak period. The crossing time for pedestrians crossing is 30 seconds. The frequency and length of time the pedestrian crossing is used causes traffic delays and congestion on Warringah Road during peak periods.

Roads and Maritime developed and evaluated four options for improvements on Warringah Road at Forestville including:

- Option 1 – Do nothing and maintain the existing road configuration along Warringah Road within Forestville and retain the existing pedestrian crossing across Warringah Road
- Option 2 – Install a pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road at Starkey Street and widen Starkey Street
- Option 3 – Install pedestrian bridges over Warringah Road at Starkey Street and Brown Street
- Option 4 – Install a pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road at Starkey Street without widening Starkey Street.

Following this assessment, Roads and Maritime selected the preferred option which includes removing the signalised pedestrian crossing of Warringah Road at Starkey Street and installing a new pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road with access provided by stairs and lifts on both sides of the bridge.

Roads and Maritime prepared an options report for the Starkey Street Pedestrian Bridge proposal which outlined the four options that were developed and evaluated, and provides information on how the preferred one (Option 4) was chosen. The information is available on the project web page at www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/sydney-north/index.html
1.2 The proposal

The key features of the proposal include:

- Installing a new pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road east of Starkey Street
- Removing the existing pedestrian crossing at the traffic lights on the western side of the intersection of Warringah Road and Starkey Street
- Relocating the existing eastbound bus stop on the northern side of Warringah Road from west of Starkey Street to east of Starkey Street near the proposed pedestrian bridge entry
- Providing new pedestrian connections to the pedestrian bridge entry and bus stop
- Altering the Starkey Street car park to accommodate the proposed new pedestrian bridge
- Installing new pedestrian fencing in a number of locations
- Installing new landscaping and signage
- Relocating utilities.

The benefits of the proposed pedestrian bridge would include:

- Improving the efficiency of traffic flow along Warringah Road at Forestville, particularly westbound traffic in the morning peak and eastbound traffic in the evening peak
- Reducing delays on Warringah Road in both the morning and evening peak periods
- Supporting improvements to road-based public transport on Warringah Road by improving traffic capacity
- Improving safety, by separating pedestrians from a busy main road
- Improving transport access by aligning bus stops with the proposed pedestrian bridge
- Providing urban design improvements around the bridge.

The figure above is the preliminary concept design that was shown in the Options Report.
2.0 Consultation approach

2.1 Consultation objectives

Roads and Maritime started consultation in December 2015 and invited feedback on the proposal as the project developed towards the display of the Review of Environmental Factors in mid 2015. The purpose of the community consultation was to inform local residents and stakeholders of the proposal and seek their feedback.

2.2 How consultation was done

Roads and Maritime distributed (see map below) a four page A4 community update to 5,500 households on 5 January 2015 (Appendix A). People were encouraged to submit feedback at any time direct to Roads and Maritime’s project manager via email or telephone. The distribution zone appears below.

2.3 Distribution zone map
3.0 Consultation report

3.1 Overview

Roads and Maritime received feedback on the proposal from about 40 community members or organisations. The feedback from the community for the proposal was generally positive as many motorists regularly experience delays at the Starkey Street/Warringah Road intersection due to the high frequency of pedestrians activating the signalised crossing at this location, particularly during peak travel periods. Separating pedestrians from vehicle traffic by installing a pedestrian bridge was therefore considered an improvement both to traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

However, there were some common matters from the community and these are summarised in this report. The feedback included:

- Visual impacts of pedestrian fencing in the local environment
- Property acquisition to accommodate the bridge
- Specific location of the proposed bridge and changes to the location of nearby bus stops
- Improving traffic flow during peak travel periods
- Removing the signalised intersection on the eastern side of Starkey Street
- Disabled access, ramp and lift inclusions
- Reducing the number of car parking spaces in the car park, which services the Forestville Memorial Hall and Senior Citizens Centre.

Comments were also received which were outside the current scope of work. These included:

- Requests for a pedestrian bridge outside the Forestway shops
- Requests for traffic improvements at Boundary Street, Eastern Valley Way and the Roseville Bridge.
3.2 Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community feedback</th>
<th>Roads and Maritime Services response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual imposition of pedestrian fencing in the local environment, including the potential for bridge advertising.</td>
<td>Roads and Maritime is not expecting to have any advertising on this proposed pedestrian bridge. As the proposal progresses from its current preliminary design stage through the concept and detailed design phases, the form and design details of the bridge would be defined in more detail. As part of the bridge development, Roads and Maritime has engaged an urban designer to review the visual aspects and impacts and develop a strategy for the design of the bridge and its surrounds. Other built and proposed structures in the area would be considered to ensure that the proposed pedestrian bridge complemented the existing location. In addition, the urban design review would include reinstating current landscaped areas and trees with additional landscaping to be included where possible.</td>
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<td>Property acquisition to accommodate the bridge.</td>
<td>The proposal would require partial property acquisition of one property, located at 612 Warringah Road, Forestville (the Forest Animal Hospital). Partial acquisition of this property would be required along Warringah Road, to provide sufficient room for the lift shaft and stairwell as well as required maintenance. Consultation with the affected property owners started in early December 2014 and will continue as more details about the design are confirmed.</td>
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<td>Specific location of the proposed bridge.</td>
<td>A single pedestrian bridge at the intersection of Warringah Road with Starkey Street and Ferguson Street was selected as the preferred option as it would improve traffic for the local road network, including public transport and road safety. This option would require partial property acquisition from one property and the loss of a number of parking spaces, however the impact to the environment and community have been minimised when compared to the other options. This option would also involve relocating the eastbound bus shelter to be near the proposed pedestrian bridge and providing safe access through the adjacent car park. The details of the proposed pedestrian bridge will be finalised in the detailed design stage.</td>
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<td>Changes to the location of bus stops.</td>
<td>This proposed option involves relocating the eastbound bus shelter closer to the pedestrian bridge and providing safe access through the adjacent car park. The new location for the eastbound bus stop on the northern side of Warringah Road is indicative only as the design is at a preliminary stage. Further investigation work including survey, urban design review and safety audits would inform the eventual location of the bus stop. The new location would line up with the proposed pedestrian bridge to encourage a safe crossing of Warringah Road via the bridge. There are no plans to relocate any other bus stops within the vicinity of this proposal and any changes to bus stop locations are done in consultation with Transport for NSW.</td>
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Removing the signalised intersection on the eastern side of Starkey Street.  

There is currently a very high demand for the pedestrian crossing across Warringah Road at Starkey Street due to the local buses, shops, community facilities and schools. More than 100 pedestrians per hour use the crossing in the morning peak period. The minimum time for pedestrians crossing is 30 seconds. The frequency and length of time the pedestrian crossing is used causes traffic delays and congestion on Warringah Road during peak periods.

Four options were considered to improve the traffic flow and reduce delays through the intersection of Warringah Road and Starkey Street and Ferguson Street. A single pedestrian bridge at the intersection of Warringah Road with Starkey Street and Ferguson Street was selected as the preferred option as it would improve traffic flow on the road network, public transport and road safety. The investigation and assessment process is described in the Options Report which is available on the Roads and Maritime website.

Removing the on road signalised pedestrian crossing on Warringah Road would take away the pedestrian crossing phase from the traffic signals, which would remove the 30 seconds (including inter-green time) needed for the pedestrian crossing phase. This change would improve traffic flow through the intersection and reduce delays and ensure vehicle traffic is not stopped by the frequent activation of the existing at grade pedestrian crossing signal.

Queries about the provisions for disabled access, ramps and lifts.  

Roads and Maritime is proposing a lift and stair arrangement on both sides of the proposed pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian bridge would include the lift facilities on both sides which would be large enough to cater for wheelchairs or other mobility aids, prams and bicycles. In addition, the bridge crossing would be wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass each other.

A primary consideration during these investigations was to determine who was using the signalised crossing currently and who would therefore require access if a pedestrian bridge was erected at this location. The Forestville area is distinguished by its well established residential areas, many schools and childcare centres, a variety of places of worship, the Forestville Neighbourhood shopping centre and many community facilities including the Memorial Hall and Senior Citizens Centre.

In the preliminary stages, providing ramps for access in addition to stairs was considered. However, to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the ramps would be a substantial size which would increase the impacts on adjacent properties and trees as well as impacting the visual amenity of the area. Therefore, we are not considering ramps.

As a result, lift access is proposed on both sides of the bridge in addition to stairs so community members including those with less mobility or young children and prams are able to cross in a similar fashion to the existing signalised crossing.
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<tr>
<th>Reduction in the number of car parking spaces in the car park, which services the Forestville Memorial Hall and Senior Citizens Centre.</th>
<th>The preliminary concept design identified the loss of up to seven car parking spaces to accommodate the pedestrian bridge. Since that time, as part of the design development for the bridge, measures to reduce this impact were considered further. The preferred option has been refined to minimise the impacts on these parking spaces. The current proposal would impact up to five car parking spaces to accommodate the new stairwell and lift structure. This would include the loss of three parking spaces, and two additional parking spaces would be modified to allow cars to park under the stair structure. Options to reduce this impact further by moving the bridge closer to Warringah Road were considered, but due to safety concerns and extensive underground utilities in the road corridor this was not feasible.</th>
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<td>Bridge maintenance.</td>
<td>The development and assessment of potential options for the proposed pedestrian bridge included consultation with Roads and Maritime Asset Maintenance Division. Consideration was given to common maintenance issues such as vandalism and alternative access if the lifts are out of service when selecting the preferred option.</td>
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<td>Maintaining traffic flow and avoiding ‘bottlenecks’ on Warringah Road.</td>
<td>In addition to the improvements achieved by removing the signalised pedestrian crossing across Warringah Road, adjustment of the signal timing and phasing at the intersection would be carried out by the Transport Management Centre to achieve the maximum improvements to the intersection and local area. For the broader Warringah Road corridor, Roads and Maritime is considering the proposed work in the context of other road work in Frenchs Forest (such as the Northern Beaches Hospital Road Connectivity and Network Enhancement work) to develop an approach for the efficiency of the whole corridor to optimise the road network.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision of pedestrian bridges across Warringah Road, or on the eastern side of Starkey Street/Ferguson Street only.</td>
<td>Four options were considered to improve the traffic flow and reduce delays through the intersection of Warringah Road and Starkey Street and Ferguson Street. The option selection process was carried out with representatives from Transport for NSW, Warringah Council, the Transport Management Centre, Roads and Maritime representatives and specialist consultants. A single pedestrian bridge at the intersection of Warringah Road with Starkey Street and Ferguson Street was selected as the preferred option as it would improve traffic for the local road network, including public transport and road safety. This option would require partial property acquisition of one property and the loss of a number of parking spaces, however the impact to the environment and community has been minimised when compared to the impacts of the other options. The preferred option also provided the greatest traffic benefits in relation to value for public money of all the options considered. This option would also involve relocating the eastbound bus shelter to be near the proposed pedestrian bridge and providing safe access through the adjacent car park. The investigation and assessment process is described in the Options Report which is available on the Roads and Maritime website.</td>
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4.0 Next steps

Roads and Maritime will prepare a Review of Environmental Factors to examine the potential impacts of the Starkey Street Pedestrian Bridge proposal and outline measures to reduce and manage the impacts. The Review of Environmental Factors will be displayed in mid 2015 for community and stakeholder comment. We will consider all comments in finalising the project design and will continue to liaise with the community throughout the project.

Following the display of the Review of Environmental Factors, Roads and Maritime will prepare a community consultation report to respond to the matters the community and stakeholders raise during the display.

Roads and Maritime will continue to inform local residents and stakeholders as the project progresses.
Appendix A – Community update

Starkey Street Pedestrian Bridge, Forestville

The NSW Government is planning improvements at the Starkey Street and Warringah Road intersection at Forestville to improve traffic flow.

Roads and Maritime Services is proposing to remove the signalised pedestrian crossing of Warringah Road at Starkey Street and install a new pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road to the east of Starkey Street.

The proposed pedestrian bridge would increase the transport efficiency on Warringah Road through Forestville, minimise delays, allow for road-based public transport and improve road safety.

What improvements are proposed?

There is currently a very high demand for the signalised pedestrian crossing of Warringah Road at Starkey Street due to the local buses, shops, community facilities and schools. Over 100 pedestrians per hour use the crossing in the morning peak period. The minimum crossing time for this pedestrian crossing is 25 seconds. The frequency and length of time the pedestrian crossing is used causes congestion on Warringah Road during peak times.

Roads and Maritime developed and evaluated four options to improve this intersection. Options that were developed and evaluated included:

- **Option 1 – (do nothing)** – Maintaining the existing road configuration along Warringah Road within Forestville and retaining the existing pedestrian crossing across Warringah Road

- **Option 2** – Installing a pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road at Starkey Street and widening Starkey Street

- **Option 3** – Installing pedestrian bridges over Warringah Road at Starkey Street and Brown Street

- **Option 4** – Installing a pedestrian bridge over Warringah Road at Starkey Street and not widen Starkey Street.

Evaluation of the options included traffic modelling to assess network and intersection performance, an economic analysis and a value/risk management workshop.